



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/634,434	08/08/2000	Randal Raymond Stark	24-NS-06020	4385

7590 09/09/2003

John S Beulick
Armstrong Teasdale LLP
One Metropolitan Square
Suite 2600
St Louis, MO 63102-2740

EXAMINER

RHODE JR, ROBERT E

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3625

DATE MAILED: 09/09/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/634,434

Applicant(s)

STARK ET AL.

Examiner

Rob Rhode

Art Unit

3625

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-120 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 86-102 and 106-120 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-85 and 103-105 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 08 August 2000 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). ____
- 2) ☒ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 4. 6) ☐ Other:

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

Applicant's election with traverse of Group I in Paper No. 3 is acknowledged. The traversal is on the ground(s) that the subject matter of all claims is sufficiently related and therefore is not a serious burden for the examiner. This is not found persuasive because the Groups I and II require different class/subclass search and analysis.

The requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

Drawings

The drawings filed on 8/8/2000 are acceptable subject to correction of the informalities indicated on the attached "Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review," PTO-948. In order to avoid abandonment of this application, correction is required in reply to the Office action. The correction will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States

Art Unit: 3625

only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 1 – 21, 23 – 35, 37 – 64, 66 – 72, 74 - 85 and claims 103 – 105 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being unpatentable over Spriggs (US 6,421,571 B1).

Regarding claim 1 and related claims 33, 77, 83 and 103, Spriggs teaches a method and system for managing internal components of power plants using a network-based system including a server system coupled to a centralized interactive database and at least one client system, said method comprising the steps of - receiving information relating to internal components of a specific plant (see at least Abstract, Col 1, lines 61 – 67 and Figures 1 – 4); storing the information into a centralized database (see at least Col1, lines 65 – 66 and Figures 1 – 3); updating the centralized database with information received (see at least Col 1, lines 61 – 67); cross-referencing the information received against the specific plant see at least Col 1, lines 1 – 10 and Col 8, lines 43 – 44); and providing information in response to an inquiry (see at least Col 2, lines 56 – 64 and Figures 1 – 3).

Regarding claim 2 and related claims 43 and 84 and claim 3 and related claim 44 as well as claims 4, and related claim 45, a method wherein said step of “*receiving*” information further comprises the step of receiving data for at least one of a Dresden plant, a Dresden plant, a LaSalle 1 plant, a LaSalle 2 plant, a Quad Cities 1 plant, and a Quad Cities plant. Please note that in online methods and systems for interactive

data – “for at least one of a Dresden plant, a Dresden plant, a LaSalle 1 plant ” and other non-functional descriptive material cited in these claims is given little patentable weight. The phrase(s) and or word(s) are given little patentable weight because the claim language limitation is considered to be non-functional descriptive material, which does not patentably distinguish the applicant’s invention from Spriggs. Moreover and as taught by Spriggs, interactive databases have been capable of these functions and have had these capabilities well before the applicant’s invention. Thereby, the non-fictional descriptive material is directed only to the content of the data (i.e. Core Spray Internal piping, a Dresden plant, a Dresden plant, a LaSalle 1 plant and other variations in these claims - which is received data) and does not affect either the structure or method/process, which leaves the method and system unchanged.

Regarding claim 5 and related claims 46 and 105 as well as other claims regarding “*storing*” and specifically claims 6 – 19, 71, 47 – 61 and 84, Spriggs teaches a method according wherein said step of *storing* information further comprises the step of *storing* data (see at least Abstract, Col 2, lines 65 – 67, Col 3, lines 1- 5 and Figures 1 – 4) for at least one of a Core Spray Internal piping, a Core Spray Sparger, a Lower plenum, a Shroud, a Shroud support and Access Hole Cover, a Jet Pump Diffuser, a Jet Pump Riser and riser Brace, a Jet Pump Inlet Mixer, a Jet Pump Sensing Line, an LPCI, a Top Guide 4, and a Core Plate. Please note that in online methods and systems for interactive databases with specifics such as – “a method wherein said step of *storing* information further comprises the step of *storing* data for at least one of a Dresden 2

Art Unit: 3625

information further comprises the step of *storing* data for at least one of a Dresden 2 plant” and other non functional descriptive material cited (such as Dresden plant 2) in these claims is given little patentable weight. The phrase(s) and or word(s) are given little patentable weight because the claim language limitation is considered to be non-functional descriptive material, which does not patentably distinguish the applicant’s invention from Spriggs. Moreover and as taught by Spriggs, interactive databases are capable of these functions and have had these capabilities well before the applicant’s invention. Thereby, the non-fictional descriptive material is directed only to the content of the data (i.e. Dresden 2 plant and other variations in these claims - which is stored data) and does not affect either the structure or method/process, which leaves the method and system unchanged.

Regarding claim 20 and related claim 63 as well as claim 21 and related claims 64 and 72, Spriggs does specifically disclose a method wherein said step of updating the centralized databases (see at least Figures 1 – 4) further comprises the steps of adding and deleting information and entering information on-line. Please note that Spriggs does disclose in online methods and systems for interactive databases. However, Spriggs does not specifically disclose such specifics as – further comprises the steps of adding and deleting information and entering information online, which are old and well known to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant’s invention. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have

Art Unit: 3625

method and system of Spriggs with the capability and steps to add and delete information on-line.

Regarding claim 23 and related claims 66 as well as claim 25 and related claim 68, Spriggs teaches a method wherein said step of providing training information in response to an inquiry comprises the steps of: downloading requested information from a server system; and displaying requested information on a client system in response to the inquiry (see at least Abstract and Figures 1 – 3).

Regarding claim 24 and related claims 67 and 81, Spriggs teaches a method wherein said step of providing information further comprises the step of printing (Col 28, lines 5 – 6)

Regarding claim 26 and related claim 69 as well as 27 and related claim 70, Spriggs teaches a method wherein said step of accepting an inquiry further comprises the steps of: displaying information on the client system (see at least Figures 1 and 7) identifying at least one of an option relating to a Core Spray Internal piping, a Core Spray Sparger, a Lower plenum, a Shroud, a Shroud support and Access Hole Cover, a Jet Pump Diffuser, a Jet Pump Riser and riser Brace, a Jet Pump Inlet Mixer, a Jet Pump Sensing Line, an LPCI, a Top Guide 4, and a Core Plate; and receiving an inquiry from the client system (see at least Figures 1 and 7) regarding at least one of an option relating to a Core Spray Internal piping, a Core Spray Sparger, a Lower plenum, a Shroud, a Shroud

support and Access Hole Cover, a Jet Pump Diffuser, a Jet Pump Riser and riser Brace, a Jet Pump Inlet Mixer, a Jet Pump Sensing Line, an LPCI, a Top Guide 4, and a Core Plate. Please note that the non-functional descriptive material such as Core Spray Internal piping and other non-functional descriptive material cited in these claims is given little patentable weight. The phrase(s) and or word(s) are given little patentable weight because the claim language limitation is considered to be non-functional descriptive material, which does not patentably distinguish the applicant's invention from Spriggs. Moreover and as taught by Spriggs, interactive databases have been capable of these functions and have had these capabilities well before the applicant's invention. Thereby, the non-fictional descriptive material is directed only to the content of the data (i.e. Core Spray Internal piping and other variations in these claims - which is data) and does not affect either the structure or method/process, which leaves the method and system unchanged.

Regarding claim 28 and related claim 74, Spriggs does not specifically disclose a method wherein said step of receiving an inquiry from the client system further includes the step of submitting a request through pull down menus. Please note that Spriggs does address the use of menus (see at least Figure 7). However, Spriggs does not specifically disclose the capability to provide pull down menus, which is old and well known to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention. It therefore would have been obvious to provide the method and system of Spriggs with pull down menus in order to have provided the capability.

Regarding claim 29 and related claim 75, Spriggs teaches a method wherein said step of displaying information further includes the step of displaying an HTML document downloaded by the server system (Figure 7).

Regarding claim 30 and related claim 76, Spriggs teaches a method wherein said step of displaying further comprises the step of displaying at least one alternative from various alternatives available to the user (Figures 7 and 8).

Regarding claim 31, Spriggs teaches a method wherein said step of downloading the information in response to the inquiry further comprises the steps of: accessing the centralized database; searching the database regarding the specific inquiry; retrieving information from the database; and transmitting the retrieved information to the client system for display by the client system (see at least Abstract and Figures 1 – 3 and 7 – 8).

Regarding claim 32 and related claims 78 and 104, Spriggs teaches a method wherein the client system and the server system are connected via a network and wherein the network is one of a wide area network, a local area network, an intranet and the Internet (Figure 2).

Art Unit: 3625

Regarding claim 34, Spriggs teaches a system wherein said client system is further configured with: a displaying component for displaying at least one of an option relating to a Core Spray Internal piping, a Core Spray Sparger, a Lower plenum, a Shroud, a Shroud support and Access Hole Cover, a Jet Pump Diffuser, a Jet Pump Riser and riser Brace, a Jet Pump Inlet Mixer, a Jet Pump Sensing Line, an LPCI, a Top Guide 4, and a Core Plate; and a sending component to send an inquiry to the server system so that the server system can process and download the requested information to the client system (Figures 1 – 3) and (35) wherein the sending component functions in response to a click of a mouse button (Col 8, lines 1 – 10) as well as (claims 37 and 82) wherein said system is further configured to be protected from access by unauthorized individuals (Col 27, lines 66 – 67) and (38) wherein said server system is further configured with - a collection component for collecting information from users into the centralized database; a tracking component for tracking information on an on-going basis; a displaying component for displaying information on at least one of an option relating to a Core Spray Internal piping, a Core Spray Sparger, a Lower plenum, a Shroud, a Shroud support and Access Hole Cover, a Jet Pump Diffuser, a Jet Pump Riser and riser Brace, a Jet Pump Inlet Mixer, a Jet Pump Sensing Line, an LPCI, a Top Guide 4, and a Core Plate; a receiving component for receiving an inquiry from the client system regarding at least one of an option relating to a Core Spray Internal piping, a Core Spray Sparger, a Lower plenum, a Shroud, a Shroud support and Access Hole Cover, a Jet Pump Diffuser, a Jet Pump Riser and riser Brace, a Jet Pump Inlet Mixer, a Jet Pump Sensing Line, an LPCI, a Top Guide 4, and a Core Plate; and

an accessing component for accessing the centralized database and causing the retrieved information to be displayed on the client system (see at least Abstract and Figures 1 – 4) and (39) wherein said server system further configured with a receiving component for receiving an inquiry to provide information from one of a plurality of users (Figure 1). Please note that the non-functional descriptive material such as Core Spray Internal piping and other non-functional descriptive material cited in these claims is given little patentable weight. The phrase(s) and or word(s) are given little patentable weight because the claim language limitation is considered to be non-functional descriptive material, which does not patentably distinguish the applicant's invention from Spriggs. Moreover and as taught by Spriggs, interactive databases have been capable of these functions and have had these capabilities well before the applicant's invention. Thereby, the non-fictional descriptive material is directed only to the content of the data (i.e. Core Spray Internal piping and other variations in these claims - which is data) and does not affect either the structure or method/process, which leaves the method and system unchanged.

Regarding claim 40, Spriggs teaches a system wherein said server system further configured with a processing component for searching and processing received inquiries against the data storage device containing a variety of information collected by the collection component (Abstract and Figures 1 – 3).

Art Unit: 3625

Regarding claim 41, Spriggs teaches a system wherein said server system further configured with a retrieving component to retrieve information from the data storage device (Figures 1 – 3).

Regarding claim 42, Spriggs teaches a system wherein said server system further configured with an information fulfillment component that downloads the requested information after retrieving from the data storage device to the plurality of users in the order in which the requests were received by the receiving component (Figures 1 – 3).

Regarding claim 62, Spriggs teaches a system wherein said server system further configured to: track information on a real time basis; and store information on a real time basis by updating stored information by adding the new information to the centralized database on a real time basis to provide up-to date information instantaneously to the user upon a request (Abstract and Figures 1 – 4).

Regarding claim 79, Spriggs teaches a management system wherein the server system is further configured to: download information to be displayed on client system's graphical user interface (Figure 7); and print at least some of the downloaded information (Col 28, lines 5 – 6) and (80) wherein the information to be downloaded is in a pre-determined format (Figures 1 – 4) as well as (81) wherein the information to be printed is in a pre-determined format (Col 28, lines 1 – 6).

Art Unit: 3625

Regarding claim 85, Spriggs does not specifically disclose a system wherein said server system further configured to predict the probability of timing for failure of the component based on the component specific information. However, Spriggs does address monitoring the plants assets in order to limit any down time for key assets. Moreover, the ability to predict failure of components is old and well known – especially in the airline industry and therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have provided the system of Spriggs with the capability to predict the probability of timing failure in order to minimize risk of production interruption at the plant.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 22, 36, 65 and 73 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Spriggs (US 6,421,571 B1) in view of Bodo (US 6,122,239).

Spriggs substantially discloses and teaches the applicant's invention.

Art Unit: 3625

However, Spriggs does not specifically disclose and teach a method and system wherein the sending component functions in response to a voice command.

On the other hand and regarding claim 22 and related claims 36, 65 and 73, Bodo teaches a method and system wherein the sending component functions in response to a voice command (Col 16, lines 20 – 22).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have provided the method and system of Spriggs with the method and system of Bodo to have enabled wherein the sending component functions in response to a voice command – in order to provide ease of use by a plant technician. In this regard, it would allow the technician to work on a correcting problem, while communication with appropriate individuals.

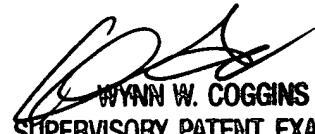
Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Rob Rhode whose telephone number is 703.305.8230. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 7:30am - 4:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Wynn Coggins can be reached on 703.308.1344. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Art Unit: 3625

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703.306.1113.



WYNN W. COGGINS
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600

RER